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Surf the Web on TV!

Now appearing on your local cable channel – the City of Bloomington’s Web site! You can surf the City’s site without a computer. Just tune into cable channel 17 and call 952-881-2739 to connect. Plug into topics such as job postings, City Council agendas and minutes, crime statistics, City Code, latest news and upcoming events.

For more information, contact Tim Sasse, Communications, at 952-563-8788. ♦

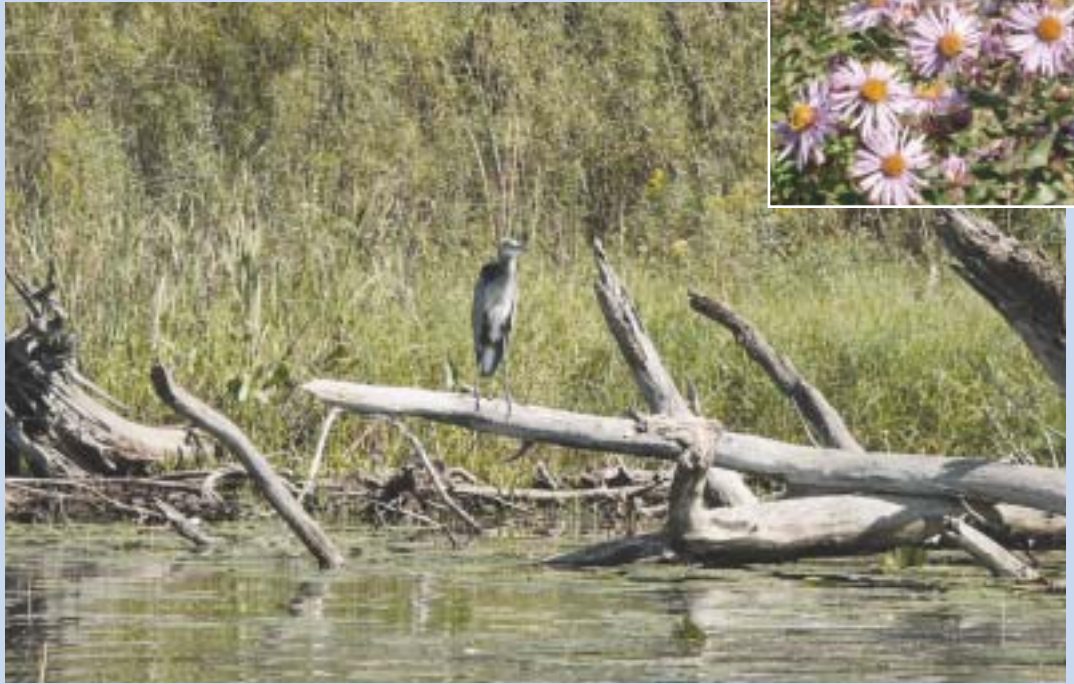
Restoring the shore

Wildlife and flowers along the edges of Bloomington’s Bush Lake

More than 100 native species of vegetation have been restored at Bush Lake, creating one of the most diverse and unique lakeshores in the metropolitan area.

The shoreline restoration was the second phase of the Bush Lake Outlet Project that was initiated to help the lake maintain a normal water level. In 2000, a pipe and lift station were installed in Bush Lake to pump water to nearby Anderson Lake.

After the water level dropped, the native seed bank was found dormant in the soil. The shoreline was recreated naturally by mowing and applying herbicide to the invasive plants so that the native species could grow. The wide variety of vegetation, as well as dead trees exposed by the extended high water, has also made the shore a rich habitat for birds and other wildlife.



The three-year restoration project was a collaboration of the City of Bloomington and the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District. Management of the shoreline will continue on a

smaller scale to ensure vegetation diversity and to prevent invasive species from returning. For more information, call Scott Anderson at 952-563-4867. ♦

Two species found at Bush Lake are the great blue heron and the New England aster.

National Night Out



Bloomington participation among nation’s best

Bloomington is a national award winner for outstanding participation in the 20th Annual National Night Out (NNO) crime, drug and violence prevention program held last August. Our city was recognized as the **fifth best in the nation** among communities with populations of 50,000 - 99,999. The 2003 NNO was the largest ever, involving 34 million people in 10,000 communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories and military bases worldwide. NNO participation in Bloomington increased from 294 neighborhood groups in 2002 to **316 neighborhoods** in 2003. For more information, call Crime Prevention Specialist Nikki Pierson at 952-563-8808. ♦

City Council Update

Voters select 2004 Council Change in at-large seat

Familiar faces and one new representative will make up the Bloomington City Council beginning January 2004. Mayor Gene Winstead and Councilmembers Steve Peterson, Heather Harden, Steve Elkins and Vern Wilcox were re-elected to their seats in the November General Election that had a 37.8 percent voter turnout. Newly elected Council at Large representative Amy Darr Grady, an attorney with her own firm, will fill the seat left vacant by Mike Fossum.

Fossum says goodbye

Fossum, who did not seek re-election, says he is leaving the Council knowing that Bloomington is in good financial shape.

“We’ve maintained the Aaa from Moody’s since 1998 and AAA from Standard and Poor’s since 2000, the highest possible bond ratings from

these agencies,” Fossum said. “I am happy to have been a small part of it.”

Accomplishments that Fossum is most proud of are representing Bloomington residents against the construction of the Black Dog Amphitheater and being part of redevelopment projects at France and Old Shakopee Road, 94th Street and Lyndale Avenue, and the Mall of America Phase II. Fossum is thankful for the service opportunity he’s had over the last four years.

Terms begin

The Mayor and Councilmembers will be sworn in at a City Council organizational meeting on January 2. ♦



Election results

Mayor

Gene Winstead

Councilmembers

At Large

Amy Darr Grady

District I

Steve Peterson

District II

Heather Harden

District III

Steve Elkins

District IV

Vern Wilcox

Councilmember at Large David Abrams’ term expires in January 2006.

City of Bloomington

1800 West Old Shakopee Road
Bloomington MN 55431-3027

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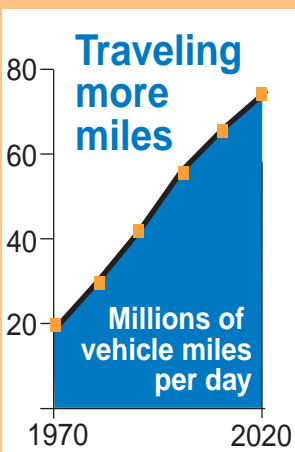
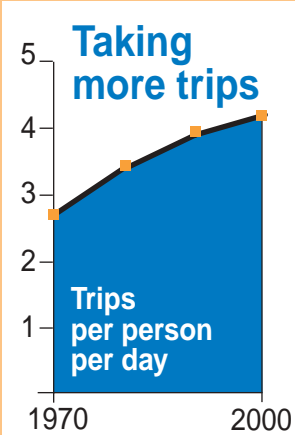
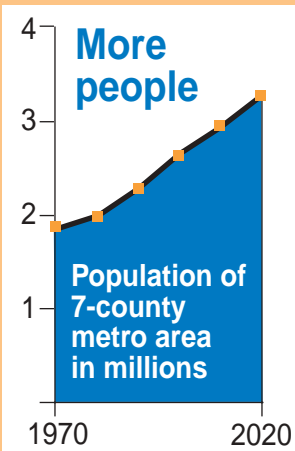
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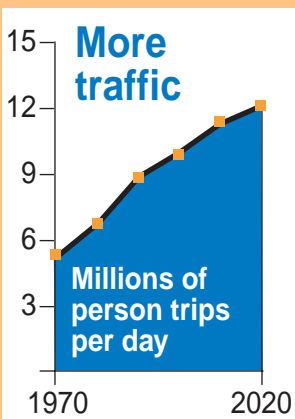
Services that Strengthen our Community

Traffic and transportation

Our location puts Bloomington on the map



equals



Mayor Gene Winstead

You've heard that the saying, "Location, location, location," is probably the greatest determining factor in value when buying a home or starting a business. Among the many reasons Bloomington is a thriving, vibrant community, a key factor is its location.

Our proximity to an international airport and the intersection of I-494 and I-35W attracts businesses that lower our taxes and provides needed economic activity. People like to live where they have access to many amenities and this demand increases our home values. However, the obvious downside to living near these major transportation links is increased traffic.

Changing attitudes

The Texas Institute of Technology recently reported that traffic congestion is worsening. The Twin Cities metropolitan area was ranked second in traffic congestion growth in the nation according to the report. What are the contributors? A look at our neighborhoods reflects the changes. In the 1950s, most homes had single car garages; in the 60s and 70s, two-car garages; and today, home designs include space for three cars.

Demand is great

The I-35W Solutions Alliance and I-494 Corridor Commission, whose members consist of Bloomington and surrounding metropolitan cities and counties, cite several contributors to traffic congestion, including increases in population, households, employment, total daily trips and daily per miles traveled. Since 1970, daily person trips have more than doubled and daily vehicle miles traveled have tripled. The bottom line: More people are traveling more miles and taking more trips. See graphs.

Improving our roadways

Keeping the major thoroughfares in Bloomington flowing is important to our city's viability and helps direct traffic away from residential streets. No one likes to be inconvenienced by construction detours and single lanes, but the result is smoother flowing traffic and improved safety. However, improvement projects are expensive and have to be implemented in segments.

Traffic calming study

In December 2002, the Council directed Engineering staff and the Traffic and Transportation Advisory Commission (TTAC) to look at ways to reduce the volume and speed of traffic in neighborhoods.

TTAC is developing a recommendation that includes how traffic-calming devices may be applied and funded. The study was presented at a Council study session in November.

Alternatives

There is no easy answer to traffic congestion, and road improvements alone can't solve it. Cities like Bloomington were developed with a low-density, automobile-dependent orientation, creating the need to drive for everyday activities. Integrating residential and commercial uses through redevelopment may help reduce vehicle trips.

Higher density housing

According to the Metropolitan Council's life-cycle housing policy, an increasing number of residents want a shift from lower density to higher density housing. Bloomington redevelopment projects currently underway are addressing these needs including:

- ◆ The 96-unit Realife Senior Cooperative located at 94th Street and Lyndale Avenue.
- ◆ Construction of 128 condominiums and 40 townhouses

For updates on major road construction projects, visit the City's Web site at

www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keyword "news."

es at the old municipal building site at 2215 W. Old Shakopee Road.

The City is also considering plans for high residential densities along the LRT corridor that combine retail, offices, entertainment and housing.

Enhance qualities

The good news from the Texas Institute study is that traffic-calming measures such as signal coordination and ramp meters help ease the burden. Although there may not be an immediate solution to traffic congestion, we are taking steps to limit its effects. We will move forward with alternatives and improvements that meet these challenges to ensure that our location continues to be one of Bloomington's greatest assets. ◆



Major projects

Some road construction projects were recently put on a priority list from the Minnesota Department of Transportation, including new interchanges on TH169 at Bloomington Ferry Road and Pioneer Trail, and the rebuild of the I-494 and TH169 interchange. Improvements are also underway on American Boulevard. The route runs parallel to I-494 from East Bush Lake Road to 34th Avenue and is designed to reduce travel time for residents and keep traffic off the interstate.

Bloomington City Council

Mayor **Councilmembers** council@ci.bloomington.mn.us



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952-888-1258(h)
mayer@ci.bloomington.mn.us



At Large
Dave Abrams
952-885-0506(h)



At Large
Mike Fossum
952-885-9056(h)
612-673-5542(w)



District I
Steve Peterson
952-884-3262(h)



District II
Heather Harden
952-835-5919(h)



District III
Steve Elkins
612-578-2103(c)



District IV
Vern Wilcox
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Photographs of elected officials are presented by the City of Bloomington for informational purposes only.

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Visit our Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us.

The **Briefing**, a bimonthly newsletter published by the municipal government organization of the City of Bloomington, Minnesota, is mailed to Bloomington residents and businesses. Direct comments or suggestions to Communications Administrator Diann Kirby, City of Bloomington, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027; phone 952-563-8818; TTY 952-563-8740; FAX 952-563-8715; e-mail dkirby@ci.bloomington.mn.us. If you require Braille, larger print or computer disk, contact Diann Kirby, 952-563-8818.

The City of Bloomington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status or status with regard to public assistance in employment or the provision of services. • The City of Bloomington does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as required by Section 35.107 of the U.S. Department of Justice Regulations, and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as mandated by Section 8.53 of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Regulations. For information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027; phone: 952-563-8700; TTY: 952-563-8740.

Spring 2004 Curbside Clean-up

Collection dates	2004 Curbside	
Location	Regular trash day is:	pickup is SATURDAY:
East of Portland	Monday	April 17
Portland to Penn	Tuesday	April 24
Penn to France	Wednesday	May 1
France to Normandale	Thursday	May 15
West of Normandale	Friday	May 22



PLEASE
keep trash and
recycling bins
out of the
street.

Safety tips

When snowplows are out, follow these important safety tips:

- ◆ While driving, keep a safe distance from snowplows.
- ◆ Don't pass a snowplow while it's plowing snow.
- ◆ Keep children away from the end of drive-ways when a snowplow passes by.

Snow emergency

A Snow Emergency is automatically in effect when three or more inches of snow have accumulated. No parking is allowed on any street for the next 48 hours or until the street has been plowed curb to curb.

Stormy weather

When the weather takes a turn for the worse, the Street Maintenance crew's challenge begins. Dedicated to providing quality service, the City's skilled equipment operators hit the roads to plow Bloomington's 341 miles of streets and 512 cul-de-sacs.

Snow and ice control

In an average year, our city has about 10 full-plowing events, but many other occasions require the Street Section to maintain streets because of icy conditions. Sand is mixed with salt and applied to the streets to help provide traction on icy spots.

A full plow

During a full plow, 28 street routes and 17 cul-de-sac

routes are cleared. Plow starting points rotate with each snowfall. The Street Section enlists employees from the City's Park, Traffic, Facilities, Equipment and Utilities areas to assist with snow removal. With a three-inch snowfall, it takes about 12 hours to clear the streets. At 3 a.m. plowing begins on the main arterial streets that are usually cleared by the morning rush hour. By 8 a.m. crews begin plowing residential streets.

For more information, call Street Maintenance at 952-563-8760. During a snowplowing event, call the Snow Emergency Hot Line at 952-563-8768. ◆

City captures video awards

The City reeled in two awards at a video competition sponsored by the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) annual conference in Denver, Colorado, in September.

"Public Works: A Blueprint for Opportunity" received second place in the Public Education category. This recruitment video for public works employees, produced for the Minnesota Public Works Association, was praised for its "excellent graphics, sharp editing, and good camera work and lighting." One judge said it "made me want to sign up!"

"Bloomington Today: The Year in Review 2002" took third place in the Public Affairs category. Judges liked the program's video and writing. They added, "Very professional host... magazine format worked well for the show."

NATOA's Annual Government Programming Awards competition recognizes excellence in broadcast, cable, multimedia and electronic programming by municipalities. This year there were more than 900 entries. ◆

Consumer Confidence Report receives statewide award

The City's Utilities Division recently received the Minnesota Section of the American Water Works Association award for having the best Consumer Confidence Report in the Metro District. They also captured the statewide award.

More than 95 percent of Minnesota's 956 community water systems participated, one of the highest rates of compliance in the nation. Stew Thornley of the Minnesota Department of Health's drinking water program said, "Utilities like Bloomington are to be commended for the additional effort that helps their customers understand more about the most precious resource we have in the world - safe drinking water."

The Minnesota Department of Health selected the finalists based on the report's graphic and visual appeal, readability of the text and clarity of information. A citizens' panel determined the final winner.

Consumer Confidence Reports are annual water quality reports that describe the source of a system's water, water content, the previous years' monitoring results and how customers can help protect this resource. ◆

Opportunity to serve

The City Council seeks applicants to serve on the following advisory boards and commissions for terms beginning January 2004. Youth positions are available on the Human Rights and Parks, Arts and Recreation Commissions.

For information or an application, call the specific board or commission, or the City Manager's office at 952-563-8780. Download an application from www.ci.bloomington.mn.us. Applications must be received by Friday, December 19, for consideration at the Council's organizational meeting in January.

Advisory Board of Health 952-563-8919

Advises the Council on issues related to personal and public health of residents. Positions for both health care providers and consumers are available.

Board of Appeal and Equalization 952-563-8706

Hears appeals of property values established by the City Assessor. Members must have experience as appraiser, Realtor, real estate attorney, property manager or be familiar with real estate valuation in the city.

Human Rights Commission 952-563-8733; V/TTY 952-563-8740

Advises the Council on matters regarding human rights, mediates discrimination complaints, provides education and advocates for human rights issues.

Merit Board 952-563-8710

Oversees administration of the merit system for City employees. Establishes and maintains rules and policies for human resource administration. The board meets as necessary.

Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission 952-563-8877

Advises the Council on matters of capital development, improvement and maintenance of city parks as well as recreation and cultural arts programs.

Planning Commission 952-562-8920

Holds public hearings and makes recommendations to the Council on land use, long-range development strategies, development applications and zoning.

Traffic and Transportation Advisory Commission 952-563-4913

Considers traffic and transportation for existing and new development, concentrates on preservation and service of the existing system, holds public hearings on neighborhood traffic concerns, considers improvements and conducts study projects. ◆

Bloomington Center for the Arts

In the spotlight

Here's your ticket to a wide variety of performance art, dance, music, exhibits and classes this season. Owned and operated by the City of Bloomington, the Bloomington Center for the Arts is housed in Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, and features a 366-seat theater with orchestra pit, a pottery and ceramics studio, visual arts classrooms and studios, two art galleries and a gift shop.

For more information, call the Bloomington Fine Arts Council at 952-563-8567 or contact these individual groups:

Continental Ballet	952-563-8562
Bloomington Art Center	952-563-8587
Bloomington Symphony Orchestra	952-563-8573
Bloomington Civic Theatre	952-563-8574
Angelica Cantanti	952-563-8572
Medalist Concert Band	952-563-8583
NOTE-able Singers	952-563-8582
Bloomington Chorale	952-563-8582

Looking for a one-of-a-kind gift?

Artwork, posters, prints, books, note cards, jewelry and more are available at the Rose Schneider Gift Shop.

Hours: M - F 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sa 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Su 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.



PARKS, RECREATION & ARTS UPDATE

For more information, call Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877.

Adult Sports

Adult tennis drills

Instructed by a certified teaching professional, drills are practice sessions to improve stroke production. Facilities include locker rooms, showers, sauna, whirlpool, steam room, swimming pool, indoor track and exercise room.

When: January 7 - February 12 or
February 18 - March 26.
Times: Beginner Wednesdays 6 - 7 p.m.
Intermediate Thursdays 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Where: 98th Street Northwest Athletic Club.
Cost: \$53 for six one-hour lessons.
Limit: Six per class; minimum four.
Register: Call Parks and Recreation.

Daytime volleyball

All games are played at the Bloomington Armory, 3300 West 98th Street. Feel free to show up alone; teams are formed on the spot each week.

Dates: Tuesdays and Thursdays, beginning January 6.
Time: 9:30 - 11 a.m.
Cost: \$1.25 each session.

Youth Activities

Bloomington Athletic Association (BAA)

Information Hotline: 952-888-0807, plus mailbox number.
Web site: www.baaonline.org

Month	Mailbox	Activity	Ages
January	#21	Girls Volleyball	Grades 4 - 12
March	#11	Boys and Girls Baseball: Mini-Mite (Age 4 by 9/1/03)	Age 4 - 5
		In-House	Grades K - 8
		Majors	Grades 9 - 12
	#20	Girls Softball	Grades 1 - 8
	#20	Co-Rec Softball	Grades 9 - 12

Registration dates are available on the BAA Information Hotline. The *BAA Update* is distributed in the Bloomington Public Schools and these private schools: Nativity of Mary, Mt. Hope Redemption, Bethany Academy, Minnehaha Academy, Bloomington Christian School and Bloomington Lutheran. Residents with children attending other schools can call the Hotline and request to be put on the BAA mailing list.

Hockey

BAA Ice Hockey provides the opportunity for all Bloomington youth, ages 4-1/2 - 16 (Mites through Junior Gold B), to learn skating skills and play hockey. Teams play District 6 Hockey games in the Bloomington Ice Garden. In February, BAA will host a Pee Wee C Hockey tournament with teams from around Minnesota. For more information, call Jerry Kaley at 952-854-1970 or visit www.baaonline.org.

The **Bloomington Amateur Hockey Association** brings ice hockey instruction and competition to all interested boys and girls, ages 5 - 18. Tournaments will be held at the Bloomington Ice Garden:

- ◆ **Regional Holiday Tournament, December 26 - 31.**
 - ◆ **The Bloomington Squirt Invitational, January 14 - 18.**
- For more information, call Bob Hendricks at 952-918-0110 or visit www.bloomingtonhockey.com. ◆



The Adaptive Recreation & Learning Exchange (AR&LE) provides opportunities for individuals with disabilities to participate in recreational, social and educational programs. These opportunities are for people with varied ability levels in specially designed programs that meet their needs. A detailed quarterly brochure is available by calling Parks and Recreation. ◆

Galaxy Youth Centers

- ◆ Oak Grove Middle School, 1300 W. 106th St.
- ◆ Olson Middle School, 4551 W. 102nd St.
- ◆ Valley View Middle School, 8900 Portland Ave.

Galaxy Youth Centers provide a safe, nurturing environment for youth, grades 6 to 8. The centers are open Monday through Friday from 2:30 - 6 p.m. For more information, call 952-886-8848. ◆

BLOOMINGTON LOVES ITS KIDS

This month-long series of events combines community and family fun with educational programs and ceremonies to honor organizations who help kids and kids who help others. Parks and Recreation, Bloomington Public Schools and many community groups call upon residents to join in the celebration of our children.

Please sponsor activities that will foster the mission of Bloomington Loves Its Kids. To participate, call Chad Duerkop at 952-563-8877.

Kick-Off

Thursday, January 29
6:30 p.m.

Knott's Camp Snoopy,
Mall of America

Recognition Ceremony
for those who have done something special
to benefit our community!

- ♥ Youth ♥
- ♥ Volunteer Groups ♥
- ♥ Volunteer organizations that serve youth ♥

Community Carnival

Saturday, February 28
12:30 - 3 p.m.

Northwestern Health Sciences
University, 84th and Penn

Includes:

- ♥ Entertainment ♥ Exhibits ♥
- ♥ Multi-Cultural Event ♥ Pie Walk ♥
- ♥ Preschool Play Room ♥
- ♥ AND ♥
- ♥ Much ♥ Much ♥ More! ♥



Holiday
Open House

Where: Gideon H. Pond House,
Pond-Dakota Mission Park, 401 East 104th Street.
When: Sunday, December 21.
Time: 1 - 4 p.m.
◆ House tours.
◆ Holiday music and hymn singing.
◆ Historic Pond sermon reading from Christmas past at 2 p.m.
◆ Refreshments.
Cost: \$3.
For more information, call Parks and Recreation. ◆



Parks and Recreation is planning winter festival activities that include:

- ◆ Snowshoeing.
- ◆ Cross-country skiing.
- ◆ Hockey.
- ◆ Skating.
- ◆ Ice fishing.

When: Thursday - Saturday, January 22 - 24.

Where: Various locations in Bloomington.

For more information, call Parks and Recreation or visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords "Winter Fete." ◆

Bloomington Center for the Arts

Events are held at Bloomington Center for the Arts, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. For more information, call the Bloomington Fine Arts Council at 952-563-8567.

Bloomington Art Center (BAC)

BAC Gallery Players

A Christmas Carol

Jon Stentz directs a Radio Theater Live performance of Dickens' classic holiday tale.

When: Friday, Dec. 12; Saturday, Dec. 13 at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 14 at 2 p.m.

Where: Black Box Theater.

Tickets: \$7. For reservations, call 952-563-8587.

Metamorphosis – To Be or Not to Be

One of Minnesota's most respected artists, Ta-coumba Aiken, presents his paintings, drawings and sculptures. His rhythmic patterns and bursts of vibrant color have been described as music for your eyes.

When: January 9 - February 20.
Opening reception, Friday, January 9, 6 - 8 p.m.

Where: Inez Greenberg Gallery.